

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electronic device comprising:
 - a base;
 - a display;
 - a cursor control member including an elongate, slender, rigid housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably fixing the cursor control member to the base;
 - a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display; and
 - a locking mechanism for securing the cursor control member to the port on the base so as to prevent unintentional withdrawal of the cursor control member from the port, the locking mechanism including a release mechanism operable to unlock the cursor control member from the port so that the cursor control member can be removed from the port.
2. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.
3. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.
4. The electronic device according to claim 3 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.
5. The electronic device according to claim 3 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.
6. The electronic device according to claim 3 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

7. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the attachment element of the cursor control member and the port have complementary configurations such that the cursor control member cannot rotate about its longitudinal axis relative to the movable surface on the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

8. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the attachment element of the cursor control member and the port have complementary guide surfaces which engage each other upon insertion of the cursor control member into the port and guide the attachment element of the cursor control member into position for engagement with the port.

9. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein an end of the cursor control member has a stylus tip.

10. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and the attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that content stored in the memory of the cursor control member can be communicated to a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

11. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that the memory of the cursor control member is usable by a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

12. The electronic device according to claim 1 wherein the cursor control member includes a power supply and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

13. The electronic device according to claim 1 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

14. An electronic device comprising:

a base;

a display;

a cursor control member including an elongate, slender, rigid housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably fixing the cursor control member to the base;

a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display; and

wherein the attachment element of the cursor control member and the port have complementary configurations such that the cursor control member cannot rotate about its longitudinal axis relative to the movable surface on the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

15. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

16. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

17. The electronic device according to claim 16 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

18. The electronic device according to claim 16 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

19. The electronic device according to claim 16 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

20. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein the attachment element of the cursor control member and the port have complementary guide surfaces which engage each other upon insertion of the cursor control member into the port and guide the attachment element of the cursor control member into position for engagement with the port.

21. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein an end of the cursor control member has a stylus tip.

22. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and the attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that content stored in the memory of the cursor control member can be communicated to a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

23. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that the memory of the cursor control member is usable by a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

24. The electronic device according to claim 14 wherein the cursor control member includes a power supply and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

25. The electronic device according to claim 14 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

26. An electronic device comprising:

a base;

a display;

a cursor control member including an elongate, slender, rigid housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably fixing the cursor control member to the base;

a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display; and

wherein the attachment element of the cursor control member and the port have complementary guide surfaces which engage each other upon insertion of the cursor control member into the port and guide the attachment element of the cursor control member into position for engagement with the port.

27. The electronic device according to claim 26 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

28. The electronic device according to claim 26 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

29. The electronic device according to claim 28 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

30. The electronic device according to claim 28 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

31. The electronic device according to claim 28 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

32. The electronic device according to claim 26 wherein an end of the cursor control member has a stylus tip.

33. The electronic device according to claim 26 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and the attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that content stored in the memory of the cursor control member can be communicated to a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

34. The electronic device according to claim 26 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that the memory of the cursor control member is usable by a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

35. The electronic device according to claim 26 wherein the cursor control member includes a power supply and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

36. The electronic device according to claim 26 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

37. An electronic device comprising:
a base;
a display;
a cursor control member including an elongate, slender, rigid housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably fixing the cursor control member to the base;
a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port being adapted to translate movement of the cursor control member into control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display when the cursor control member is engaged with the port; and

wherein an end of the cursor control member has a stylus tip.

38. The electronic device according to claim 37 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

39. The electronic device according to claim 37 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

40. The electronic device according to claim 39 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

41. The electronic device according to claim 39 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

42. The electronic device according to claim 39 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

43. The electronic device according to claim 37 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and the attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that content stored in the memory of the cursor control member can be communicated to a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

44. The electronic device according to claim 37 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that the memory of the cursor control member is usable by a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

45. The electronic device according to claim 37 wherein the cursor control member includes a power supply and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control

member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

46. The electronic device according to claim 37 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

47. An electronic device comprising:

a base including a processing unit;

a display;

a cursor control member including a housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably securing the cursor control member to the base and a memory; and

a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port being adapted to translate movement of the cursor control member into control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display when the cursor control member is engaged with the port and wherein the port and the attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that content stored in the memory of the cursor control member can be communicated to the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

48. The electronic device according to claim 47 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

49. The electronic device according to claim 47 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

50. The electronic device according to claim 49 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

51. The electronic device according to claim 49 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

52. The electronic device according to claim 49 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

53. The electronic device according to claim 47 wherein the cursor control member has a memory and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that the memory of the cursor control member is usable by a processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

54. The electronic device according to claim 47 wherein the cursor control member includes a power supply and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

55. The electronic device according to claim 47 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

56. The electronic device according to claim 47 wherein the processing unit of the base produces a second control signal that controls movement of the cursor control member upon occurrence of a predetermined event when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

57. An electronic device comprising:
a base including a processing unit;
a display;
a cursor control member including a housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably securing the cursor control member to the base and a memory; and
a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the

display and wherein the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that the memory of the cursor control member is usable by the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

58. The electronic device according to claim 57 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

59. The electronic device according to claim 57 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

60. The electronic device according to claim 59 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

61. The electronic device according to claim 59 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

62. The electronic device according to claim 59 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

63. The electronic device according to claim 57 wherein the cursor control member includes a power supply and the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

64. The electronic device according to claim 57 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

65. The electronic device according to claim 57 wherein the processing unit of the base produces a second control signal that controls movement of the cursor control

member upon occurrence of a predetermined event when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

66. An electronic device comprising:

a base including a processing unit;

a display;

a cursor control member including a housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably securing the cursor control member to the base and a power supply; and

a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display and wherein the port and attachment element of the cursor control member are configured such that power produced by the power supply in the cursor control member is available to operate the processing unit in the base when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

67. The electronic device according to claim 66 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

68. The electronic device according to claim 66 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

69. The electronic device according to claim 68 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

70. The electronic device according to claim 68 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

71. The electronic device according to claim 68 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

73. The electronic device according to claim 66 further including a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

74. The electronic device according to claim 66 wherein the processing unit of the base produces a second control signal that controls movement of the cursor control member upon occurrence of a predetermined event when the cursor control member is engaged with the port.

75. An electronic device comprising:

a base;

a display;

a cursor control member including a housing, the cursor control member having an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing for detachably securing the cursor control member to the base;

a port carried by the base for receiving the attachment element of the cursor control member, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display; and

a storage slot on the base, the storage slot being configured to receive the cursor control member.

75. The electronic device according to claim 74 wherein the port is arranged on an adapter that is releasably connectable to the base.

76. The electronic device according to claim 74 wherein the cursor control member includes a manually operable input mechanism that produces control signals when operated and the attachment element and port are configured so as to communicate those control signals to a processing unit in the base.

77. The electronic device according to claim 76 wherein the input mechanism comprises a button.

78. The electronic device according to claim 76 wherein the input mechanism comprises a wheel.

79. The electronic device according to claim 76 wherein the input mechanism comprises a touch surface.

80. A cursor control member for an electronic device having a display and a port, the port including a movable surface that moves in response to movement of the cursor control member when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, movement of the movable surface producing control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display, the cursor control member comprising an elongate, slender, rigid housing with an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing which can be received in the port and wherein an end of the housing is configured as a stylus tip.

81. A cursor control member for an electronic device having a display and a port, the port being adapted to translate movement of the cursor control member into control signals for directing movement of a cursor in the display of the electronic device when the cursor control member is engaged with the port, the cursor control member comprising an elongate, slender, rigid housing with an attachment element arranged at one end of the housing which can be received in the port and a memory, wherein the memory is accessible by the electronic device when the cursor control member is engaged in the port.